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JAMES HARDY LEAVES RESIDENTS WITH EXPENSIVE PROBLEMS

The Asbestos Contractors Group (ACG) are calling for a fund to be established to assist householders to identify asbestos in their homes and to remove any that is found to be in hazardous condition.

“This really is a serious problem”. said Pat Preston, who has worked for improved standards in the building and asbestos removal industries for many years, and is now a Consultant to the ACG. “There are thousands of homes around Australia containing asbestos products. Many people don't know where it is in their homes and of those that do, most can't afford the cost of removing or encapsulating it safely”

The ACG are a group of Contractors who have come together to promote and lobby for the highest standards when in the asbestos removal industry.

“Clearly neither James Hardy nor the Govt. want to address this issue, but the future cost to society will be enormous if we don't do anything. People should be helped to identify asbestos in their homes and if necessary, get some financial assistance to remove it”.

Australia has the highest rate of Mesothelioma in the world and it is still rising. While the first “wave’ of the disease affected those who worked in the asbestos manufacturing and the building industries, most cases now are members of the public who were exposed to products in a domestic setting.

Current Health and Safety Regulations offer protection to workers and the general public in a commercial setting, there is nothing to protect or assist home owners.

“Some people have suggested that both James Hardy and Government were negligent in their duty to protect the public. They were both aware of the dangers of asbestos long before it was banned in Australia”.

“We urge people to get some advice before attempting any “do-it-yourself” renovations. This is a deadly dust and the dangers of handling it without proper protection should not be underestimated”.

“WorkSafe Victoria have recently developed guidelines for local municipal workers who have to deal with members of the public turning up with a trailer load of asbestos sheet they have removed themselves, so the State Government knows this is a serious issue.” Mr Preston said. “People who do this expose themselves, their families and the general public to this potentially deadly dust. The rate of asbestos related disease in Australia will continue to grow if something is not done to assist property owners to identify asbestos and to make it safe”.